



Legendary naturalist **John James Audubon** lived and operated a general store in Henderson from 1810-1819.

Audubon dedicated his life to his artistic calling after his goal of building a mill led to his bankruptcy. Audubon went on to publish *The Birds of America*, the most recognized natural history book in the world.



Now close to extinction, the **Ivory-Billed Woodpecker**, was not encountered with ease. Audubon cited that chances of sightings were possible only by, "venturing into deep gigantic dark cypresses, interrupted by moss-covered branches, and thousands of creeping plants of numberless species!" (plate 417)



Audubon was bewildered by the now-extinct **Passenger Pigeon** in the autumn of 1813. "I left my house at Henderson, and I observed the Pigeons flying in greater numbers than I had ever seen them before. Making a dot for every flock, I found that 163 had been made in 21 minutes... And still met more the farther I proceeded." (plate 62)



The scene of the **Carolina Turtle Dove** is one of Audubon's favorites. Showing love, devotion, and happiness. Audubon saw the birds as he saw himself, and gifted them with his feelings and values, "A faithful representation of two as gentle pairs of Turtles as ever cooed their loves... Ornamented with white blossoms, emblematic of purity and chastity." (plate 17)



"**White Pelicans** were frequently seen by me on a well known sand-bar, which protects Canoe Creek Island," Audubon admits shortly after moving to Henderson, Kentucky. "How often have I watched them with delight!" (plate 311)



Once confined to North America coasts, the **Double-Crested Cormorant** can be commonly seen along the Ohio River. Audubon observed hundreds nesting off the islands of Labrador in 1843, "Their nests are placed as near each other as the nature of the ground will permit." (plate 257)



"The **Purple Martin** is extremely courageous. They frequently follow and tease an Eagle, until he is out of sight of the Martin's box. All our cities are furnished with houses for the reception of these birds. He sweeps along the streets, seizing a fly, or plays with the string of the child's kite." (plate 22)



"The **Osprey** (Fish Hawk) has a great attachment to the tree on which it has built its first nest, and returns to it year after year. I have found this bird in various parts of the interior of the United States, but always in the immediate neighbourhood of rivers or lakes." - Audubon (plate 81)



Audubon's Favorite Birds

Observed in Henderson, KY



Trumpeter Swan - Both majestic and elegant, Audubon kept one as a pet while living in Henderson. "Trumpeter," as they called him, became accustomed to his family, eating from hand and chasing the kids and dogs around the garden.



Snow Goose - While residing at Henderson, Audubon, "Never failed to watch the arrival of this species." Thousands of snow geese still migrate through the Henderson sloughs every winter.



Cliff Swallow - Audubon embraced every opportunity of examining this bird. They would flock at sunset, throwing themselves into a vortex with astonishing quickness.



White-crowned Sparrow Audubon called it, "The handsomest bird of its kind," after observing in Henderson in 1817. "No other bird in the United States exceeds it in beauty."



Louisiana Water Thrush "Much and justly as the song of the Nightingale is admired, I am inclined, after having often listened to it, to pronounce it in no degree superior to that of the Louisiana Water Thrush." -Audubon



As Audubon painted the **Pigeon Hawk**, he pleaded through mail with Lucy, his wife, to join him so that they could be together again. She refused so he went to Louisiana to convince her in person. They were never again separated except for short periods, until his death 32 years later. (plate 75)



Audubon studied the **Hooded Merganser** in Kentucky, citing it was, "A most expert diver... Five or six, perhaps ten, fly low over the waters in wide circles... and in a few seconds you hear the rushing noise they make as they alight on the bosom of the still pool." (plate 232)



The **Great Blue Heron** is one of Audubon's most sought-after prints. He was limited in positioning large birds because the paper available measured about 28x39 inches. "You may now and then surprise one feeding, but to walk up towards one would be a fruitless adventure." -Audubon (plate 211)



The **Wild Turkey Cock** he painted several times, once even in Henderson. The Wild Turkey was the most popular of his images for decades, only losing out to his more recent works of the heron and egret. Audubon's personal seal was a miniature of this image. He completed this pose in Louisiana in 1825. (plate 1)



Great Horned Owl Audubon often encountered this owl during his ventures along the Ohio River and in the sloughs of Henderson. On one such trip along the Henderson waterfront, he found himself stuck in "quicksand" and feared for his life until rescued by his boatman. (plate 61)



The **American Crow**, a "serviceable bird," as Audubon believed, deserved our respect. Although shy, yet extremely cunning and courageous, the crow fed on "myriads of grubs every day that might lay waste the farmer's fields," yet the bird was often viewed as a pest. (plate 156)



The **Belted Kingfisher** resides among bodies of water throughout the United States, digging nests along river and creek embankments. Audubon would catch this bird, "Plunging into the sea," to feed on small fry. The female exhibits the "belt" marking for which the species is named. (plate 77)



The **Bald Eagle**, as Audubon wrote, is a fitting symbol of, "A great people living in a state of peaceful freedom." He first painted the eagle feeding on a Canada Goose in 1820 while floating down the Mississippi, but later replaced the goose with a catfish, which is more typical of the eagle's diet. (plate 31)

About the Sculptor

Kentucky native Raymond Graf graduated from Murray State University with a background in sculpture and ceramics, and has focused on cast-bronze sculpture the past 20 years of his career.

Provided by: The City of Henderson, The Downtown Henderson Partnership, and the Renaissance Kentucky Project. Source: *Birds of America*, Audubon.org

Find these hidden creatures on the Audubon sculptures!

